

Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

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SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY FIGURES, 1976 CATCH; PROBLEMS AND
OUTLOOK FOR 1977

REF : KRAVANJA LETTER DATED DECEMBER 28 TO Y.C. LIU

1. TAIWAN FISHERIES BUREAU ESTIMATES THAT TOTAL CATCH BY ROC FISHERMEN IN 1976 WAS 801,000 MT VALUED AT US\$565,789,500. SUBTOTALS (TONNAGE) ARE (A) DEEPSEA FISHERY 323,000 MT; (B) OFFSHORE FISHERY 313,000 MT; (C) COASTAL FISHERY 31,000 MT; AND (D) FISH CULTURE 134,000 MT. THIS IS THE LARGEST CATCH EVER FOR TAIWANESE FISHERMEN, EXCEEDING LAST YEAR'S PREVIOUS RECORD PERFORMANCE BY 21,000 MT, AS WELL AS THE GOVERNMENT'S TARGET. CONTRIBUTING TO THE UNEXPECTEDLY GOOD PERFORMANCE WERE (A) A RECOVERY OF WORLD TUNA PRICES FROM RECESSION LOWS, (B) RECOVERY OF EEL PRICES IN THE JAPANESE MARKET AFTER A SHORT PERIOD OF OVERPRODUCTION AND MARKET GLUT, AND (C) A RECORD-BREAKING RUN OF GREY MULLET AT THE END OF THE YEAR.

2. TONNAGE EXPORTED IS AN ESTIMATED 152,000 MT VALUED AT US\$340,000,000, OF WHICH EELS ACCOUNT FOR \$104,000,000 AND SHRIMP \$36,000,000.

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3. PROSPECTS FOR THIS YEAR DO NOT APPEAR AS BRIGHT, ALTHOUGH THE GROC IS STILL STICKING TO ITS TARGET OF 800,000 MT. NUMBER ONE PROBLEM, OVERSHADOWING ALL OTHERS, IS OF COURSE THE ESTABLISHMENT BY SEVERAL GOVERNMENTS OF 200-NAUTICAL-MILE NATIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ZONES. ALTHOUGH TAIWANESE EXPOSURE IN THE NORTHEASTERN PACIFIC IS VERY LIMITED, EXPECTED DECLARATIONS BY NATIONS OTHER THAN THE U.S., PARTICULARLY IN

THE WESTERN PACIFIC, ARE BOUND TO HAVE A SERIOUS EFFECT ON BOTH DEEP-SEA AND OFF-SHORE OPERATIONS (WHICH ACTUALLY INCLUDE THE CONTINENTAL SHELVES OF NATIONS OTHER THAN THE ROC). PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES POINT TO A CATCH DECREASE OF 10,000 MT FOR TUNA LONG-LINERS, 80,000 MT FOR TRAWLERS AND GILL-NETTERS, AND 2,000 MT FOR SQUID AND CUTTLEFISH VESSELS.

THE GROC IS ENGAGED IN BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH SEVERAL WESTERN PACIFIC, CENTRAL AMERICAN, AND SOUTH AMERICAN NATIONS, IN SOME CASES DIRECTLY, IN OTHERS THROUGH FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS, FOR MAINTENANCE OF FISHING RIGHTS OR JOINT VENTURES. GREATEST ANTICIPATED DIFFICULTY IS IN RELATIONS WITH LESS DEVELOPED, RATHER THAN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, OWING TO LACK OF CLEAR GUIDE-LINES AND PREDICTABLE ENFORCEMENT STANDARDS. THE GROC HAS ALSO SENT A RESEARCH VESSEL, THE HAI KUNG, TO ANTARCTIC WATERS TO INVESTIGATE KRILL POTENTIAL THERE, AND HOPES TO PROMOTE THE FISHING OF OTHER RELATIVELY ABUNDANT SPECIES NOT PRESENTLY IN GREAT COMMERCIAL DEMAND, SUCH AS SHARKS.

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